TC 4676

TEXT: STATE DEPARTMENT 8/7 RELEASE ON INDONESIA-EAST TIMOR TALKS
(U.S. strongly supports talks on East Timor's status) (330)

Washington -- The United States welcomes the progress made in the August 4-5 talks on the status of East Timor between the Portuguese and Indonesian foreign ministers, the Department of State said in an August 7 statement.

"The two sides have decided to hold further discussions in the expectation of reaching an agreement by the end of 1998 on wide-ranging autonomy for East Timor. The two nations also plan to exchange interests sections before the end of the year. We view both of these moves as constructive, and expect that they will help build trust that will facilitate discussions of further steps," the State Department said.

Following is the text of the State Department release:

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman

August 7, 1998

STATEMENT BY JAMES B. FOLEY, DEPUTY SPOKESMAN

INDONESIA: EAST TIMOR TALKS

The United States welcomes the progress made in the August 4-5 talks on the status of East Timor between the Portuguese and Indonesian foreign ministers, a UN-facilitated initiative that we have strongly supported. The communique issued by the foreign ministers on August 5 in New York, and separate diplomatic accounts, indicate that the two governments have agreed to several positive and constructive interim steps, and are ready to discuss further concrete measures that could open the way for a solution acceptable to all parties.

For example, the two sides have decided to hold further discussions in the expectation of reaching an agreement by the end of 1998 on wide-ranging autonomy for East Timor. The two nations also plan to exchange interests sections before the end of the year. We view both of these moves as constructive, and expect that they will help build trust that will facilitate discussions of further steps.

(end text)
NNNN